

Message Text

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73

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11

FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 AGR-20 DODE-00 PM-09

H-02 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 SAJ-01

MBFR-03 GAC-01 NIC-01 RSR-01 /191 W
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R 121905 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8285

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUNICH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 2937

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR AL

SUBJECT: ALBANIAN INTERNAL SITUATION

1. RESPONSIBLE FONOFF OFFICIAL HAS BRIEFED US ON RECENT REPORT FROM INTELLIGENCE SOURCE COMMENTING ON ALBANIAN DOMESTIC CONDITIONS. MAJOR THRUST OF REPORT IS THAT ALBANIAN ECONOMY IS IN SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES. OVERALL ECONOMIC SITUATION CHARACTERIZED AS STAGNANT AND MARKED BY WIDESPREAD INEFFICIENCY AND ABSENTEEISM. AGRICULTURAL PROSPECTS ALSO DESCRIBED AS HIGHLY UNFAVORABLE.

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2. ITALIAN REPORT NOTES SERIOUS SHORTAGES IN SUPPLY OF MEAT, MILK, EGGS AND OTHER FOOD ITEMS. FAMILIES ARE RATIONED TO 3 KILOS OF FLOUR, 2 KILOS OF BEANS AND ONE HALF LITER OF OIL PER MONTH. GOVERNMENT HAS RECENTLY MADE CASH PURCHASES OF MEAT (HUNGARY), FISH (BULGARIA) AND BEANS (TURKEY) IN CRASH EFFORT TO ALLEVIATE SHORTFALLS.

3. REPORT ALSO SPEAKS OF SHARP DIFFERENCES WITHIN RULING GROUP OVER ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUES. HOXHA SPEECH OF NOVEMBER 28, 1972 IN WHICH ALBANIAN LEADER REJECTED FOREIGN AID FROM CAPITALIST AND REVISIONIST SOURCES CITED AS IMPORTANT SIGNPOST IN CURRENT CAMPAIGN OF INTERNAL BELT TIGHTENING. MAJOR CONSEQUENCE OF SPEECH WAS UNDERMINING OF GROUP OF INTELLECTUALS ACCUSED OF MODERNIST TENDENCIES. FURTHER INDICATION OF PRESENT ATMOSPHERE IS RECENT SHUTDOWN OF RELAY STATION WHICH HAD ENABLED ALBANIANS TO VIEW POPULAR ITALIAN TELEVISION PROGRAMS. ACCORDING SOURCE, ONLY HIGHLY- PLACED OFFICIALS CAN CONTINUE TO RECEIVE ITALIAN BROADCASTS, USING SPECIAL ANTENNAS.

4. ITALIAN REPORT CONCLUDES THAT POPULAR DISSATISFACTION IS HIGH AND REPRESSIVE WAVE HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN. SITUATION IS COMPLICATED BY FACT THAT BOTH PARTY LEADER HOXHA AND PRIME MINISTER SHEHU SUFFER FROM CHRONIC AND POSSIBLY DISABLING ILLNESSES. VOLPE

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973ROME02937
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730441/aaaagzo.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Aug-2001 by willialc>; APPROVED <15-Oct-2001 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971229
Subject: ALBANIAN INTERNAL SITUATION
TAGS: PFOR, IT
To: ANKARA
ATHENS
BELGRADE
BUCHAREST
BUDAPEST
EUR
LONDON

MOSCOW

SECSTATE WASHDC

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005